

**Summer Reading**  
Honors **Junior** Language Arts  
Medina High School

**General Expectations**

Unless otherwise indicated below, all written work must be turned in by August 14<sup>th</sup>. Failure to do this will result in a severe loss of credit for the work. All of the work must still be turned in by the end of the second week of school, or the student will receive a failing grade for the first quarter. Failure to complete the summer reading/ writing assignments (or turning it in late) will NOT be grounds for dropping the class. You need to purchase or get a copy of the following books—

*The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*

*The Poisonwood Bible*

*How to Read Literature Like a Professor*

**A Classic**

Read Mark Twain's classic, *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. Early on in the first nine weeks you will be expected to write several essays exploring various literary and social ideas and issues that arise in Twain's classic story of adventure and race relations during the period prior to the Civil War. Twain's classic has been considered controversial from the time of its publication. Over the years, it has been censored for various reasons; most recently for the portrayal of African Americans and the use of derogatory language. So question the text as you read—is Twain a racist? Does the novel promote racism? Why is Twain using so much satire? How does the characterization of Jim change as the novel progresses? We encourage you to question the text and try to come up with your own answers—they don't have to be right, but a dialogue with the text is essential to a deep, analytical reading and analysis of issues as complex as race relations in America.

- **To keep track of the questions (and answers) that arise as you read, you are to keep a reading journal.** *HF* is an episodic novel, meaning it can be subdivided into various episodes or events that Huck explores on his journey down the river. **FOR EACH JOURNAL ENTRY, you should select quotation from the section of at least 2 sentences and type it at the top of your journal. Include the correct MLA parenthetical citation. Then respond to the journal with at LEAST 150 words (approx. ½ page typed). Your response could deal with setting, plot, characterization, theme, style, or any other aspect you deem relevant.** Feel free to use first person—WE WANT TO KNOW WHAT YOU THINK. It must be typed, double spaced, and grammatically correct.

- Episodes in *HF*

- Ch. 1-5      Ch. 12-16      Ch. 24-30

- Ch. 6-7      Ch. 17-18      Ch. 31-43

- Ch. 8-11      Ch. 19-23

So, if we're counting right, that's eight ½ page journals.

- After you have finished reading *HF* and completed your journals, **read the three articles** included in your summer reading packet (“Getting Past Black and White”, “On Jim and Huck”, and “Huck’s attitude toward Slavery”). **In a 250-300 word typed essay**, respond to the following:
  - It has been suggested that a sanitized or censored version of *HF* should be offered, especially for teaching in schools. After reading the novel itself and these three articles, do you agree with the creation and use of a sanitized version of *HF*, or do you feel that Twain’s message would be lost if we censored him? Include at least 2 direct references to the articles with proper MLA citation.

**A Modern Classic**

- Read Barbara Kingsolver’s novel, *The Poisonwood Bible*. As you read, you will be keeping a reading journal for this novel as well. You must complete five ½ page reading journals for the following sections. . FOR EACH JOURNAL ENTRY, **you should select a quotation from the section of at least 2 sentences and type it at the top of your journal. Include the correct MLA parenthetical citation. Then respond to the journal with at LEAST 150 words (approx. ½ page typed). Your response could deal with setting, plot, characterization, theme, style, or any other aspect you deem relevant.** Feel free to use first person—WE WANT TO KNOW WHAT YOU THINK. It must be typed, double spaced, and grammatically correct.

### ***The Poisonwood Bible***

1. the first four chapters of “The Things We Carried: Kilanga, 1959” OR the rest of Book One, “Genesis”
2. Book Two, “The Revelation” OR the Orleana Price section from Book Three, “Judges”
3. all of the chapters in the section entitled “The Things We Didn’t Know” from Book Three, “Judges” OR the Orleana Price section from Book Four, “Bel and the Serpent”
4. “What We Had Lost” from Book Four, “Bel and the Serpent” OR the Orleana Price section from Book Five, “Exodus” OR The next seven chapters (up to “Rachel Price: the Equatorial, 1984”)
5. the rest of the novel

In addition to those reading journals, you will complete a 6<sup>th</sup> journal in which you make a connection between *The Poisonwood Bible* and another novel you read during sophomore year (think: *Things Fall Apart*, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, *MacBeth*, *Oedipus Rex*, *Joy Luck Club*, etc.). Choose a character, an event, a motif, a theme, or anything else that you find relevant to compare/contrast the two novels. How does Nathan Price measure up to Atticus Finch? How is colonialism in Africa depicted in *Things Fall Apart*, and is that depiction different in *The Poisonwood Bible*? These are just two examples, but let your mind wander...where do you see recurring patterns in these stories?

### **A Contemporary Selection**

Choose one novel by one of the authors listed in this packet. **You must sign up for the author by May 29th. No more than 4 students will be allowed per author. The sign-up sheet will be available in room \_\_\_\_\_ from 7:00am until 7:20am, each school day. Once you have signed up, you will not be allowed to change your author, so make an informed choice.**

- a) Read it for fun.
- b) Create a piece of art that captures an overriding theme of the novel. You may paint (on canvas), create a sculpture, make a short film (five to ten minutes), draw a cartoon or comic strip, do a dramatic presentation—with costumes, scenery, etc., create a photo exhibit. **ABSOLUTELY NO COLLAGES.** (There are many other possibilities that I’m sure I’m overlooking that you’re welcome to explore—IF YOU AREN’T SURE, EMAIL US.) The bottom line is for you to demonstrate a deep level of engagement with your novel through some artistic presentation. **PLEASE INCLUDE THE TITLE OF YOUR NOVEL ON YOUR ARTWORK SOMEWHERE!**
- c) Include an accompanying passage from the novel that supports the theme brought out by your artwork. You will read this passage in class when you present your artwork. **YOU MUST TURN IN A WRITTEN COPY OF THE PASSAGE AS WELL (EITHER COPIED AND TYPED OR A PHOTOCOPY FROM THE BOOK).**
- d) Type a one page explanation of the artwork and how it relates to both the theme of the novel and the chosen passage. The typed explanation, copy of the passage, and artwork must be available on the first day of school in order to receive any credit for it. Please staple the attached “presentation rubric” to the front of your essay.

NOTE -- The work you choose must be by one of these authors and must be a novel of at least 200 pages (not a collection of short stories or poetry) if you wish to receive any credit for this part of the assignment. **Also, if there has been a movie based on the novel you choose, your presentation must include discussion of significant differences between the movie and the novel in order to receive any credit. You may need to rent the movie to accomplish this. If you do not want to watch the movie, choose another novel.**

### **A Guide on Your Journey**

In addition to your summer reading novels, we are asking that you get your hands on a copy of *How to Read Literature Like a Professor*. You don't have to read this over the summer, although you might want to and it might help you come up with some ideas for your reading journals. We will be referring to this book throughout the year and assigning chapters to read...so get a copy now!

### **In Summary**

Obviously, we won't be able to hear from everyone on the first day of school, but you should come to class on the first day with:

- 1) a thorough reading of *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* and *The Poisonwood Bible*
- 2) a readiness to explore a variety of literary concepts and censorship issues surrounding the novels
- 3) Eight ½ page reading journals on *Huck Finn*.
- 4) One 250-300 word essay responding to the literary criticisms on *Huck Finn* and the prompt...
- 5) Five ½ page reading journals on *The Poisonwood Bible*
- 6) An additional sixth journal comparing/contrasting *The Poisonwood Bible* to another novel read during the sophomore year
- 7) a piece of art or performance art inspired by your contemporary novel AND....
- 8) a thoughtful and well written one page explanation of your work.

Getting in touch with us, Maggie Steffen and Ron Douglas, this summer may be a trick. We have to turn in our laptops at the end of the school year for upgrading, so that's one hindrance, and we'll likely be traveling or working summer jobs at various times throughout the summer; that's another. We will check-in at the school and our email addresses periodically throughout the summer, so if you should have questions, you may send them to [steffenm@mail.mcsoh.org](mailto:steffenm@mail.mcsoh.org) or [douglasr@mail.mcsoh.org](mailto:douglasr@mail.mcsoh.org). Emailed questions should be submitted prior to August 1<sup>st</sup>. Waiting until the last minute for any of this work is ill-advised.

We hope you have a relaxing and most enjoyable summer.

### **HEADS-UP**

We highly recommend buying your own copies of major works covered in the course. These will likely include but are not limited to The Grapes of Wrath, The Great Gatsby, Catcher in the Rye, and The Sun also Rises. MHS does have copies of several of these titles, but the books are in pretty rough condition. If you have your own copy, you can write marginal notes in them.